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The Words of Knowledge.

A

SERMON

PREACHED

December 25, 1755.

BIBL. CANT. ACAD.

And afterwards at

Deadman's Place, Southwark.

January 4, 1756.

By TIMOTHY LAMB.

Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Church.

My Son, eat thou Honey, becauſe it is good; and the Honey-Comb, which is ſweet to thy Taſte: So ſhall the Knowledge of Wiſdom be unto thy Soul: When thou haſt found it, then there ſhall be a Reward, and thy Expectation ſhall not be cut off. Prov. xxiv. 13, 14.

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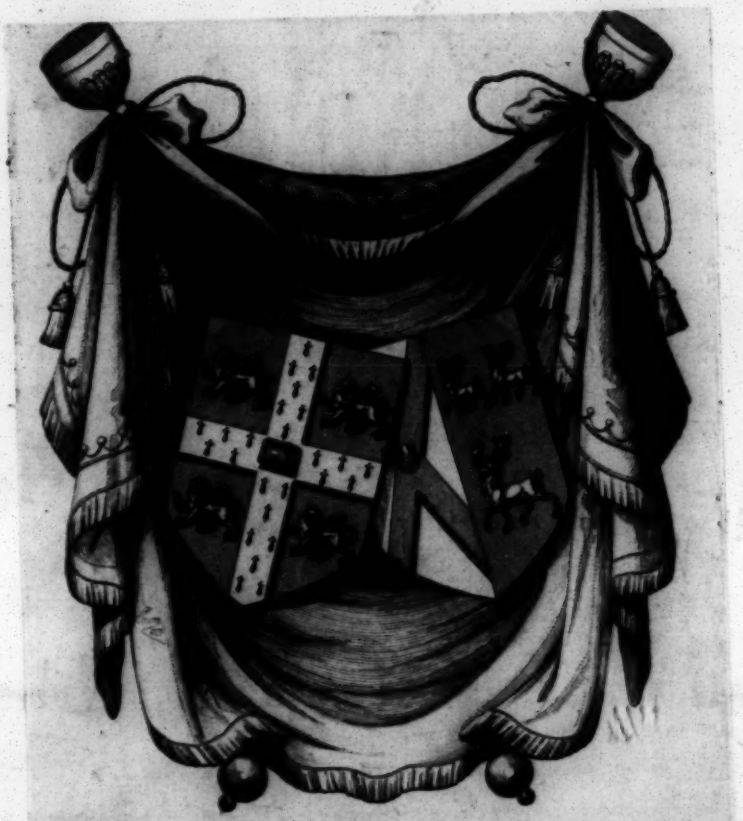

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To the CHURCH of CHRIST in Deadman's Place, Southwark.

My dear Friends,

AS the great God who fixes the Bounds of our Habitations, has been pleaſed to caſt my Lot among you, I eſteem it my Duty to purſue your ſpiritual Intereſt, and to aim at your Soul's preſent and everlaſting Advantage. With this View, for the ſhort Time I have miniſter'd to you in holy Things, it has been my Endeavour (as far as the Lord has given me an Inſight into it,) to preach the Goſpel in it's Purity and Simplicity; ſetting forth and inſiſting upon, the great Doctrines of Free Grace and Salvation by Chriſt; ſeeking to ſpeak to the Hearts of my Hearers, and practically enforcing theſe Truths, by Motives drawn from the Word of God. It is a great Encouragement to me to continue in this Work and Labour of Love, that you have been nouriſhed up in the Words of Faith and good Doctrine, under your late excellent Paſtor * my worthy Predeceſſor: He was remarkable for his Attachment to the great *Peculiarities* of the Goſpel, ſuch as lye at the Foundation of the *Chriſtian* Religion, and which are able to make us wiſe unto Salvation, through Faith and Love which is in Chriſt Jeſus. By the Miniſtry of this good Servant of our great Lord, many of you have (I truſt) been rooted and built up in Chriſt. Let me intreat your Prayers that I may follow him, as he followed the Apoſtle and high

* Dr. Marryat.

high Prieſt of our Profeſſion Chriſt Jeſus; have the ſame Skill to preach and Ability to defend the Goſpel; the ſame Zeal for God and the ſame earneſt Deſires to win Souls: If you really ſtrive together in your Prayers to God for me, and jointly aſk theſe Things, we may warrantably hope, that the Lord will work, even by ſo weak an Inſtrument, to fulfil the Purpoſes of his Grace, and to do Good to his choſen People.

It is in Compliance with your Requeſt that I now lay before you the following plain Diſcourſe, wherein I have endeavoured, chiefly with a View to younger Profeſſors, to guard againſt Error, and if the Lord pleaſe to eſtabliſh the Wavering in the Belief of thoſe Doctrines, which I really eſteem to be the Words of Knowledge: If theſe Ends are in any Meaſure attained, if any of you are hereby edified or comforted, give Glory to God, who only teaches to profit, and pray for me, that Utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my Mouth boldly, to make known the Myſtery of the Goſpel. And now my Friends I commend you to God and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up and give you an Inheritance among them that are ſanctified,

and am, Your ſincere Friend,

and Servant in the

Work of the Goſpel,

Southwark,
Feb. 16, 1756.

Timothy Lamb.

PROVERBS XIX. 27.

Ceaſe, my Son, to hear the Inſtruction that cauſeth to Err from the Words of Knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE of one Kind or another is coveted and ſought after by the greater Part of Mankind: And ever ſince our firſt Parents eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, there have been more of their Poſterity who have deſired to know Evil than Good: and had rather underſtand the Myſteries of Wickedneſs than be quite without Knowledge: But the chief thing we ought to ſtudy, and which indeed only deſerves the Name of Knowledge, is to know God and ourſelves. In order to this we muſt ſearch the Scriptures, there we have ſuch a Revelation of the glorious Nature and infinite Perfections of the moſt high God, as he ſaw fit to give us, and as is moſt worthy

of himſelf: and there we ſee both what we are by Nature; and what we muſt be if we would pleaſe God.

The Scriptures contain the Words of Knowledge, by them we are taught, what Man is to believe concerning God, and what Duty God requires of Man: For [a] they are all given by Inſpiration of God; and are profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs. It is a deplorable Thing my Friends, that ſo many are found in this Land of Light and Knowledge, who not only reject, but contemn and deſpiſe the lively Oracles which God has delivered to his People; and account them no better than cunningly deviſed Fables: [b] Doubtleſs theſe are the Men, and Wiſdom ſhall die with them.— It is not for their Intereſt that the Scriptures ſhould be true; and therefore they endeavour to perſwade themſelves that they are utterly falſe: And while they pretend to reject the Bible becauſe of the Myſteries it contains, it is the ſtrict Morality, the real Holineſs which it requires, that renders it ſo diſagreeable and odious to them.

I hope my Brethren I need not caution you againſt ſuch Men as theſe. I am ſure I need not ſay Ceaſe to hear their Inſtruction, for they have nothing that deſerves that

[a] 2 Tim. iii. 16. [b] Job xii. 2.

that Name — Ridicule and Banter are the mighty Weapons by which the Goſpel of Chriſt is to be ſubverted——But unleſs God give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth, that Almighty Redeemer whom they now deſpiſe, will laugh at their Calamity and mock when their Fear cometh; when their Fear cometh as Deſolation, and their Deſtruction cometh as a Whirlwind; when Diſtreſs and Anguiſh come upon them. As our Lord threatens in the Perſon of Wiſdom *Pro.* i. 26, 27. But while theſe Men openly diſplay the Standard of Rebellion againſt the bleſſed Jeſus, there are others amongſt us who liſt under the Captain of our Salvation as his Friends and yet caſt off his Authority, deſpoil his Goſpel of its peculiar Glories and endeavour to reduce it to a Level with their own ſhallow Reaſon, and make it more like what they call the Religion of Nature. I truſt many of us are heartily grieved at the ſpreading of ſuch Principles as a Gangrene among the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity—— I mention not any Names or Parties, nor do I intend to reflect upon any particular Perſons. I ſhall endeavour to ſpeak the Truth in Love, and am quite regardleſs of the Cenſures that may be paſſed on me for ſo doing.

And while I am contending, and adviſing you to contend earneſtly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, and to ſtrive

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together for the Faith of the Goſpel I would be concerned to do it with a Spirit becoming the Goſpel as knowing that the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God; not having the leaſt Deſire to injure the Perſons or Characters of any who are of oppoſite Sentiments, but to be inſtrumental in the Hand of God, to ſpread the Savour of the Knowledge of Chriſt, as well as to confirm my ſelf and others in the Belief of thoſe great Doctrines of the Goſpel which are deſervedly called the Words of Knowledge—Let me therefore deſire your candid and ſerious Attention to what ſhall now be offered, and may the Lord attend it with a Bleſſing—

I ſhall apply my ſelf to improve the Words in the following Method.

Firſt. I ſhall enquire what we are to underſtand by the Words of Knowledge—and here I ſhall have Occaſion to mention, the Inſtruction that cauſes to err from them.

Secondly. I ſhall conſider the Reaſons of the Wiſe-Man's Advice. Ceaſe my Son, &c. And

Thirdly—Shall cloſe the Whole with a few Words by Way of Improvement.

Firſt. Let us enquire what we are to underſtand by the Words of Knowledge—— Would Time permit I might conſider the whole Syſtem of the Goſpel. But as that would carry me beyond the Limits of a

ſingle

ſingle Diſcourſe; I ſhall only take Notice of the following important Doctrines, which are now very much decry'd and ſpoken againſt, though they are abſolutely neceſſary to lead us into a right Knowledge of our Creator and of our ſelves.

Firſt. It is by theſe Words of Knowledge we have a clear Diſcovery of our Natural Depravity. 'Tis here we learn that we are [c] ſhapen in Iniquity and conceived in Sin as the Pſalmiſt humbly acknowledges. [d] Adam after the Fall begat a Son in his own Image after his own Likeneſs. He had then loſt the Image of God in which he was created, conſiſting in [e] Knowledge, Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs —— [f] God made Man upright, but he hath ſought out many Inventions. [g] Thus by one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin, and ſo Death paſſed upon all Men for that in him all have ſinned. By the Offence of one Judgment came upon all to Condemnation; and by one Man's Diſobedience many, that is all his Natural Seed were made Sinners.

This accounts for the Entrance of moral Evil into the Word: A Point which ſo much puzzled the wiſeſt of the heathen Philoſophers: Who though they loudly complained of the Diſeaſe, yet ſeem to be wholly

[c] Pſa. li. 5. [d] Gen. v. 3. [e] Gen. i. 27. Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10. [f] Ec. vii. 29. [g] Rom. v. 12. 18. 19.

wholly ignorant of the Origin thereof—— It was by the Sin of our firſt, our common Father and Covenant-head, that Judgment came upon all his Poſterity to Condemnation. Upon this Principle the Apoſtle accounts for the Death of Infants [h]. Death reigned from *Adam* to *Moſes*, even over them who had not ſinned after the Similitude of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion, that is over Infants who were not guilty of actual Sin: And as Death is part of the Puniſhment of Sin, part of the Wages it deſerves, how could it be inflicted upon ſuch, as had never actually ſinned, unleſs they were eſteemed Sinners by reaſon of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion? from whom they ſprang, and who was the Repreſentative of his whole Race? That Sin thus entered into the World the Scriptures tell us; and Experience abundantly proves that it ſtill wofully and univerſally reigns therein. The Pſalmiſt's Account will ſurely ſuit the natural Man, the unconverted Sinner. [i] They are corrupt, they have done abominable Works, there is none that doth Good. The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand and ſeek God: They are all gone aſide they are altogether become filthy there's none that doth Good, no, not one: The Apoſtle ſhews

[h] Rom. v. 14. [i] Pſa. xiv. 1, 2, 3.

ſhews us that this agrees to all, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* without Exception; [k] for all have ſinned and come ſhort of the Glory of God. Every Mouth muſt be ſtopped and all the World become guilty before God. [l] What is Man that he ſhould be clean? or he that is born of a Woman that he ſhould be righteous? How can Man be juſtified with God? or he be clean that is born of a Woman? It cannot be. For that which is born of the Fleſh is Fleſh. And an impure and unwholeſome Fountain, cannot yield ſweet and refreſhing Streams, for [m] who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean? not one—Thus the Scripture repreſents our Caſe; and this is its Language upon this intereſting and important Subject— [n] We are by Nature the Children of Wrath. We are univerſally polluted. The whole [o] Head is ſick and the whole Heart faint. From the Sole of the Foot even to the Head there is no Soundneſs in us; but Wounds and Bruiſes and putrifying Sores. The Underſtanding is darkned — A wrong Biaſs is ſet upon the Affections——And the Will is obſtinately bent againſt God and Chriſt--The Joys of Heaven, and the Things of eternal Moment, which deſerve our moſt ſerious Attention and higheſt Regard are neglected and deſpiſed by us.

This

[k] Rom. iii. 19. 23. [l] Job xv. 14. ch. xxv. 4
[m] Job xiv. 4. [n] Eph. ii. 3. [o] Iſa. i. 5. 6.

This is the Character of the Natural Man—A faint Sketch of the Picture of the unconverted Sinner——

And he who was never ſenſible that this is his true Character as born to the firſt *Adam*, has never yet attained to any juſt Acquaintance with himſelf; how much ſoever he may know, or think he knows of other Matters of Religion.

This then is part of the Words of Knowledge.—But is it believed and entertained as ſuch—And are Men in general humbled at the Thought of what they are? Alas no! For the greater Part even of Profeſſors delight in hearing the Inſtruction that cauſes to Err from the Words of Knowledge —— They puff themſelves up with a vain Conceit of the *Rectitude* of Man and the *Purity* of humane Nature——Things that have no *Exiſtence* but in Imagination; and the contrary to which Facts loudly ſpeak, if we would but hear their Voice; and let *Experience determine* which Side is in the Right—It were greatly to be wiſhed that we could diſcover this Rectitude and Purity among thoſe who make ſuch great Pretenſions to it. —Could we ſee the Children of ſuch Men grow up free from the common Vices of Children, and diſcovering as their Faculties enlarge themſelves no Symptoms of this *univerſal Contagion*, no Love to Sin or Delight in it; we ſhould be the more inclined

to

to credit their Pretenſions; and readier to believe that Sin is learned only by Imitation; which now evidently appears not to be the Caſe: Becauſe then ſuch as have the beſt Examples ſet before them, and enjoy the beſt Inſtructions, would always be the Beſt; and ſo on the contrary; the *Reverſe* of which we very frequently obſerve in the World —— It appears then, that till theſe things can be diſproved, we muſt look upon theſe Diſcourſes of the Rectitude of humane Nature, to be the Inſtruction which in a great meaſure, cauſes many unſtable Souls to Err from the Words of Knowledge —— It teaches them to ſay with the Church of *Laodicea*[p], We are rich and increaſed with Goods, and have need of nothing; being inſenſible that they are at the ſame Time, wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked——I go on to obſerve

Secondly. That Man is altogether unable to recover himſelf from this State of Sin and Miſery——Here the Scripture is plainly on our Side—[q] The carnal Mind is Enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the Fleſh, cannot pleaſe God——If we view our natural Condition, and conſider it as a Death in Treſpaſſes and Sins, it will be manifeſt, that we are con-

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[p] Rev. iii. 17. [q] Rom. viii. 7. 8.

demned by the righteous Sentence of God's Law as Tranſgreſſors of it; and incapable of ſatisfying its Demands for it is exceeding broad: —— It reaches to the Thoughts and Imaginations of Man's Heart, and denounces its awful Curſe on Failure of Obedience—[r]Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them —— This we are ſenſible we have none of us done; and indeed if we could yield a perfect Obedience to the divine Precept for the future, that would be no more than we owe to God, and therefore could not poſſibly make Attonement for, or obtain Remiſſion of our Sins. But here let us take notice by the way, that we are not only *judicially* dead, or condemned by the Sentence of God's Law; but alſo *ſpiritually* dead; therefore unable to recover ourſelves—We are no more capable of raiſing ourſelves to ſpiritual and divine Life, than the dry Bones in the Valley of Viſion, were able to clothe themſelves with Fleſh, to animate this Fleſh with an immortal Spirit, and perform all the Functions of Life---We are ſurely inſufficient for theſe things, and can never hope to reconcile ourſelves to God——nor do we *naturally* deſire it——The contrary Error to this, or the Inſtruction which cauſes to err from this part of

[r] Gal. iii. 10.

of the Words of Knowledge is magnifying Man's Power and Ability, crying up the Freedom of the Will, and the like. And indeed, if human Nature be ſo pure and unpolluted as theſe Inſtructions repreſent, there is little or no need of any Alteration for the better; or at leaſt of none, but what may be effected by our own Power —— If a Man thinks himſelf in Health, he will not employ a Phyſician: If he is compleatly righteous, he needs no Repentance— But I ſhall have Occaſion to ſpeak more particularly of this Matter under the next Head.

Thirdly. That there is need of ſpecial and ſupernatural Grace in order to Converſion —— However the Freedom of the Will be magnified at preſent, yet the Scripture ſeems to ſpeak quite different and oppoſite Language —— [s] If the Son make you free, you ſhall be free indeed—— [t] No Man can come unto me except the Father who hath ſent me *draw* him----No Man can come to me except it were *given* him of my Father. [u] By the Grace of God I am what I am.-- [w] It is God who worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good Pleaſure. [x] Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what haſt thou that thou haſt not received?

Theſe and many other Scriptures, prove that the great God is the Author of this

 Work,

[s] John viii. 36. [t] Ch. vi. 44. 65. [u] 1 Cor. 15. 10.
[w] 2 Phil. 13. [x] 1 Cor. iv. 7.

Work, that it can be effected only by an omnipotent Hand: None but He who created Man, and who knows the inmoſt Receſſes and Secrets of his Heart, can change it or create it anew. This Work God challenges as his own, and ſpeaks of it as done by himſelf. [y] A new Heart ſays God will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the ſtony Heart out of your Fleſh; and I will give you an Heart of Fleſh: And I will put my Spirit within you; and cauſe you to walk in my Statutes; and you ſhall keep my Judgments, and do them— Theſe, my Brethren, are the *Fruits* of the *Covenant of Grace*—— That *Better Covenant*, which was eſtabliſhed upon *better Promiſes*, than the Covenant of Works was. In this God gives freely and as he pleaſes, and the Whole is of Grace and not of Debt. The *abſolute Neceſſity* of this Work of God upon us in order to Salvation is frequently expreſſed in Scripture. Thus our bleſſed Lord ſays, [z] Except a Man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God —— And the Evangeliſt who records theſe Words of our Lord, when ſpeaking of the different Reception that he met with in the World, ſays, He came unto his own, and his own received him not, [a] But as many as received him, to them *gave he Power*

[y] Ez. xxxvi. 26, 27. [z] Jo. iii. 3. [a] Jo. i. 11, 12. 13.

Power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believed on his Name — Who were born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Fleſh, nor of the Will of Man but of God. Here all human Agency is utterly excluded; and the Work aſcribed wholly to the Grace and Power of God. [b] It is the Law of the Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus, or the quickning Spirit of Chriſt Jeſus, that ſets us free from the Law of Sin and Death. And that Spirit alone, who raiſed the dry Bones to Life, can raiſe us from the Death of Sin to the Life of Righteouſneſs —— Can ſay with a prevailing Voice, awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the Dead and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light. The Saints in all Ages have acknowledged God's Hand in this Matter——Thus the Pſalmiſt prays for Sanctification from God. [c] Waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than Snow. And again, [d] Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me. The royal Preacher alſo aſſerts, [e] That the Preparation of the Heart in Man is from the Lord: and that the King's Heart is in the Hand of the Lord: as the Rivers of Water he turneth it whither ſoever he will. The Apoſtle Paul likewiſe, who from a bloody Perſecutor, became a Follower and Preacher of Chriſt, aſcribes the mighty Change to the Grace of

[b] Rom. viii. 2. [c] Pſ. li. 7. [d] Pſa. li. 10.
[e] Prov. xvi. 1. ch. 21. 1.

of God alone. [f] By the Grace of God I am what I am: and his Grace which was beſtowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me. And again,—[g] It pleaſed God, who ſeparated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me. To this alſo the Apoſtle *Peter* bears witneſs, [h] It is the God of all Grace, who calls us to his eternal Glory, by Chriſt Jeſus. And the Apoſtle *James* ſays, [i] Every good Gift, and every perfect Gift is from above; and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no Variableneſs neither Shadow of Turning. For of his own Will begat he us with the Word of Truth—But Time would fail me to quote the Evidences of Scripture upon this Point, that 'tis the *ſpecial* and *efficacious* Grace of God alone that changes Sinners into Saints; that makes Rebels bow their Knees to the Scepter of Chriſt's Kingdom; and become his willing [k] People in the Day of his Power: I ſhall therefore only add, that this hath been eſteemed a conſiderable Part of the Words of Knowledge in all Ages of the Chriſtian Church, and that till of late, the oppoſite Inſtruction, had got but little Footing

[f] 1 Cor. xv. 10. [g] Gal. i. 15. 16. [h] 1 Pet. 5. 10. [i] James i. 17. 18. [k] Pſa. cx. 3.

ing among us. Would to God we could ſay it was ſo in the preſent Day! But *now* the Time is come of which the Apoſtle ſpake. When many ſhould depart from the Faith, and bring great and grievous Errors into the Church of Chriſt, which trouble many and overthrow the Faith of ſome—— Their Error is, That God hath vouchſafed *common and ſufficient Grace to all Men*, to be improved by every one as he pleaſes. So that they aſſert, that *it is* in Man that walketh to direct his Steps, and that 'tis quite uncertain whether the Grace of God ſhall be effectual, 'till the Will of Man gives as it were the *Caſting Vote* and makes it ſo.

But O! Chriſtians how *oppoſite* is this to the Word of God, How contrary to your own Experience? I am ready to think you can adopt the Words of a pious Biſhop * of the eſtabliſh'd Church, who thus expreſſes himſelf. " I wonder at the Doctrine which " ſome Men have advanced concerning " Free-will; and it is a Myſtery to me, " how any that ever had Experience of " God's Method, in working out Sin and " planting Grace in our Hearts, ſhould " think they can do it by themſelves, *or* " *any thing in order to it* ——Afterwards " All of us, (ſays he) too ſadly experience " what St. *Paul* long ago bewailed in him- " ſelf,

* Biſhop Beveridge.

" ſelf, [1] that what we do, we allow not——
" And once more, I am ſure ſays he, to ſay
" none ſhall be ſaved but thoſe that *will*
" *of themſelves*, would be ſad News for
" me, whoſe Will is naturally ſo backward
" to every thing that is good." Thus far this learned Biſhop——And indeed it is amazing to think how little ſuch Men make of the Grace of God, upon which the Scripture lays ſo great a Streſs—— " They
" confound (ſays a good * Writer) Grace
" and Nature, for Nature is common to all
" Men, ſo is the Grace they ſpeak of, which
" they call *ſufficient Grace*, and they ſay
" 'tis given to every Man; and we ſee in
" the Lives of Men, what are the general
" Effects of it." They ſay that the Liberty of the Will is taken away by a *ſpecial* and *effectual* Agency of God upon it---Whereas, (as one well obſerves,) the very Life and Spirit of perfect Liberty, is a Power of willing that, which by God's Law we ought to will. We ſay, that God draws us unto himſelf by the mighty Power of his Grace; but then it is [2] with the Cords of a Man and the Bands of Love. That is in a Way agreeable to our Rational Faculties, he does not force but inclines, *ſweetly*, yet *powerfully* inclines the Will to that which is good: and thus makes us his willing People in the Day

[1] Rom. vii. 15.
[2] Hoſea, chap. xi. 4.
* Dr. Edwards.

Day of his Power—Let me juſt take Notice by the Way, that had God left us to the Freedom of our own Wills only affording us what is called *Common Grace*, none of the humane Race would be ſaved; for ſince the Fall our Will is free only to that which is Evil; but to that which is Good no further than 'tis made ſo by God. O! Believer how uncomfortable and alarming is ſuch Inſtruction as this? Thou ſeeſt thy Need of Divine Grace, not only to begin, but to carry on the good Work in thy Soul; and lookeſt to God both as the Author and Finiſher of thy Faith: while the Doctrine of Free-Will ſeems to lead Men to Preſumption and a vain Conceit of their own Abilities, or to Deſpair! when they find they have not that Power which they imagine themſelves to be poſſeſt of——On the contrary, Our Doctrine affords Comfort to the penitent Sinner and to the weak Believer; by ſhowing us that God works and none can let, and that he does all things well, even according to the Counſel of his own Will; and ſo cauſes the truly convinced Soul, to cry out, [a] turn thou me and I ſhall be turned: And leads the real Penitent to acknowledge, ſurely after I was turned I repented. In fine, this Inſtruction tempts a Soul to indulge Pride, while the Words of Knowledge

[a] Jer. xxxi. 18, 19.

deeply abaſe him before the Throne of Grace, and lead him to acknowledge that his Converſion and Sanctification are owing to the Grace of God and that alone——.

Fourthly. I would obſerve, That Juſtification by Faith in Chriſt is a Part of the Words of Knowledge.

It is the current Language of Scripture, That we are juſtified by Faith without the Works of the Law. But then it is by the [o] Righteouſneſs of God, which is by the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt unto all, and upon all them that believe for there is no Difference, for we are juſtified freely by God's Grace, through the Redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus —— The lively Oracles of Truth acquaint us, that [p] Meſſiah was cut off, but not for himſelf, but to finiſh Tranſgreſſion, and to make an End of Sin, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs. The Righteouſneſs of Chriſt conſiſts in his active and paſſive Obedience, or in obeying God's Law, and ſuffering the Penalty due to the Breach thereof, in the Room and Stead of thoſe whom the Father hath given him. Chriſt magnified the Law and made it honourable; He paid the Debt which they owed to Divine Juſtice, and merited for them, Pardon and a Right and Title to Eternal Life,

[o] Rom. iii. 22. v. 24 [p] Dan. ix. 24. 26.

Life, in which the Privilege of Juſtification conſiſts; ſo that they are juſtified upon the Account of what Chriſt hath done and ſuffered as their Surety and Subſtitute. This Righteouſneſs, God freely and graciouſly imputes to all who believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and deals with them according to its infinite Virtue and Efficacy. For it is written [q] Bleſſed is the Man to whom God imputes Righteouſneſs without Works:—— And it ſhall be imputed to us alſo if we believe. This is the Reaſon why the Apoſtle oppoſes *Adam* and Chriſt, *Romans* the 5th. And the Obedience of the latter is ſet in Oppoſition to the Diſobedience of the former. For ſays he, [r] As by one Man's Diſobedience, many were made, or *conſtituted* Sinners, ſo by the Obedience of One, ſhall many be made, or *conſtituted* Righteous. [s] And, as by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, even ſo by the Righteouſneſs of One, the Free Gift, or Righteouſneſs came upon all Men to Juſtification of Life. As if he had ſaid. As all the natural Seed of *Adam* were made Sinners by his Diſobedience, ſo, in like manner, ſhall all the ſpiritual Seed of Chriſt be made righteous by his Obedience: [t] That as Sin hath reigned unto Death, even ſo might Grace reign through Righteouſneſs,

[q] Rom. iv. 6. and 24. [r] v. 9. [s] 5. and 18.
[t] Rom. v. 21.

unto Eternal Life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. —Thus, the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is the *meritorious Cauſe* of our Juſtification, and Faith is the *Way or Method* of our becoming intereſted therein: It is as the Hand extended to receive the proffered Gift, and is of the [u] Operation of God——This, I apprehend to be the Scripture Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith: But the contrary Error, or the Inſtruction which cauſes to Err from the Words of Knowledge, is ſeeking for Juſtification in any other Way than that which God hath appointed. Here the Opponents of our Doctrine are divided among themſelves—— For though they hold Juſtification by Faith, in Words, yet in reality they deny it. The Papiſts ſay, Faith is ſo excellent a Grace, that it merits at God's Hand: While others repreſent Faith as a *Condition* of our Juſtification; And ſo according to them Juſtification *by* Faith is little elſe but Juſtification *for* Faith. To this it may be ſufficient to reply. That Faith cannot juſtify as a Work performed by us, ſeeing we are expreſsly ſaid [w] to be juſtified by Faith without the Works of the Law. And again. [x] By the Deeds of the Law ſhall no Fleſh living be juſtified in the Sight of God.——Hereby all Works are excluded a Share in our Juſtification: not only ſuch

[u] Col. .i. 12. [w] Rom. iii. v. 21. [x] u. 20.

ſuch as are performed in Obedience to the *Ceremonial* Law, but likewiſe the Works of the *Moral Law*. [y] For whatſoever things the Law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the Law; that every Mouth might be ſtopped, and all the World become guilty before God. So that it's plain, that [z] by Grace we are ſaved, therefore juſtified, thro' Faith, and that not of our ſelves, it is the Gift of God: Not of Works leaſt any Man ſhould boaſt. Have we not therefore the higheſt Reaſon to join with the Apoſtle in his Deſire to [a] win Chriſt and be found in him, not having our own Righteouſneſs which is of the Law, but that which is thro' the Faith of Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith? Since [b] he was made Sin for us though he knew no Sin; that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him——Thus I have diſpatched the firſt general Head: I proceed to conſider—

Secondly. The Reaſon of the wiſe Man's Advice——Ceaſe, my Son, to hear the Inſtruction that cauſeth to Err from the Words of Knowledge. And ſurely there muſt be ſome good Reaſons for ſuch Advice——And though many might be given, I ſhall only mention two——

Firſt. The Words of Knowledge are worthy of our higheſt Regard, and moſt diligent

[y] Rom. iii. 19. [z] Eph. ii. 8, 9. [a] Phil. iii. 8. 9.
[b] 2 Cor. v. 21.

diligent Attention. Truth is rather to be choſen than Error, therefore we are admoniſhed to buy the Truth and ſell it not. And what *Solomon* ſays of Wiſdom, we may apply to the Words of Knowledge —— [c] Get Wiſdom, get Underſtanding, forget it not; nor decline from the Words of my Mouth: Forſake her not and ſhe ſhall preſerve thee; love her and ſhe ſhall keep thee: Wiſdom is the principal thing, therefore get Wiſdom; and with all thy getting, get Underſtanding: She ſhall give thy Head an Ornament of Grace; a crown of glory ſhall ſhe deliver to thee——The Doctrines I have mentioned, are contained in [d] *thoſe Scriptures* which are able to make us wiſe to Salvation, through Faith and Love which is in Chriſt Jeſus. They are faithful Sayings, and worthy of all Acceptation, therefore ſhould be frequently ſtudied by us, we ſhould meditate upon theſe things that our profiting may appear unto all.

Do we deſire to know ourſelves, to be ſenſible of our loſt Condition by Nature, and of our Inability to deliver our ſelves from it? —— Do we deſire to have a more perfect Knowledge of the grace of God which is eminently diſplayed in the Converſion of a Sinner? Do we deſire to be acquainted with the way of Juſtification before God by the Righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus

[c] Pro. iv. 5—9. [d] 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Jeſus Chriſt? If we do, let us highly eſteem and reverence the Words of true and ſpiritual Knowledge. In the

Second Place. Another Reaſon of this excellent Advice is. The dangerous Nature, and deſtructive Tendency of Error ——— However innocent Errors and Hereſies may now be thought, yet it is evident the Apoſtles had not ſo favourable an Opinion of them; for the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks of [e] ſome who would privily bring in *damnable Hereſies*, even denying the Lord that bought them, and ſo bring on themſelves ſwift Deſtruction. And the Apoſtle *Paul* tells us of ſome falſe Teachers [f] whoſe Words will eat as doth a *Canker*, or *Gangrene*; corrupting the Mind, and eating out the Power and Life of Religion. And I think it muſt be acknowledged, that if there are any *fundamental* Truths revealed in Scripture, the diſbelieving or rejecting of them, muſt be of dangerous, of fatal Conſequence. What was the Reaſon, think you, that *Paul* exhorted *Timothy* to put the Brethren in remembrance of the Things he had given him in charge, and bids him [g] take heed to himſelf and to his Doctrine, and continue in them, but becauſe of the dangerous Nature and deſtructive Tendency of ſuch Errors as cauſe us to depart

[e] 2 Pet. ii. 1. [f] 2 Tim. ii. 17. [g] 1 Tim. iv. 1. and 16 ver.

depart from the Faith, and to give heed to ſeducing Spirits? — If this be [h] Life eternal, or the Way to Life eternal, to know the only true God and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, as our Lord himſelf declares; then ſurely they who are ignorant of, or deny this only true God, are not in the way to obtain Eternal Life. This Knowledge of Chriſt, means that ſaving Knowledge which is connected with Salvation, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, [i] We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Underſtanding to know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt — This is the true God, and eternal Life— I may here juſt take Notice, that ſuch Thoughts concerning the harmleſs and innocent Nature of Error, as now too generally prevail, are quite inconſiſtent with the Charge which is given to all Chriſtians, [k] to contend earneſtly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints; [l] and to ſtrive together for the Faith of the Goſpel; becauſe, in proportion to the Opinion we entertain concerning the Importance of any Doctrine, our Contention or Strife will be more or leſs earneſt in its Defence, and againſt the oppoſite Error. But I muſt not too much enlarge, ſhall therefore only leave the Words of the Text with you, and beg of

[h] Jo. xvii. 3. [i] 1 Jo. v. 20. [k] Jude v. 3.
[l] Phil i. 27.

of God to impreſs them deeply upon all your Minds—— Ceaſe, my Son, to hear the Inſtruction that cauſeth to Err from the Words of Knowledge. And now proceed

Thirdly, to apply the whole. And

Firſt. How thankful ſhould they be to whom the Words of Knowledge are preached. You, my Friends, have the higheſt Cauſe to praiſe God who has caſt your Lot under the Miniſtry of thoſe that are not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt, but boldly preach it in its Purity and Simplicity, unadulterated with any humane Schemes or Devices. But then remember, that where much is given much is required: A ſtronger Obligation is laid upon you than upon others who have not your Advantages. In vain to you is the Goſpel preached, in vain are the Words of Knowledge inculcated if you do not profit by them, and attain to a right Knowledge of God and your ſelves--- Your Miniſters labour to do good among you; [m] they watch for your Souls as they who muſt give an Account: it is your Part, as far as in you lies, to ſee that they do it with Joy and not with Grief, for that will be unprofitable for you —— They pray for you, and readily ſay with the Apoſtle, Brethren, [n] pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free Courſe, and be glo-

 rified

[m] Heb. xiii. 17. [n] 2 Theſ. iii. 1.

rified— Remember, my Brethren, an Account will one Day be taken of the Improvement you have made of the Means of Grace with which you have been favoured, and then your Miniſters muſt be Witneſſes for or againſt you; and ſhall receive a glorious Reward as faithful Servants of Jeſus Chriſt — [o] For though Iſrael be not gathered, yet we ſhall be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and our God ſhall be our Strength— And as the Apoſtle declares, we are a ſweet Savour unto God, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh; [p] to the one, we are a Savour of Death unto Death: and to the other, we are a Savour of Life unto Life. May theſe Thoughts excite your Thankfulneſs *for*, and may God teach you to profit *by* the pure Goſpel which is preached to you.——

2dly. I would ſeriouſly addreſs myſelf to young Perſons — You, my Friends, are in the Morning of your Days, in the very Bloom of Life, and no Advice can be given more ſuitable to your Caſe than *Solomon*'s— [q] Remember thy Creator, in the Days of thy Youth, before the evil Days come, or the Years draw nigh in which thou ſhalt ſay, I have no Pleaſure in them— [r] Therefore, my Son, attend to my Words, incline thine Ear unto my Sayings; let them not depart

[o] Iſa. 49. 5. [p] 2 Cor. ii. 15. 16. [q] Ecc. xii. 1.
[r] 4 Prov. 20, 21, 22.

depart from thine Eyes, keep them in the midſt of thine Heart: for they are Life to thoſe that find them; and Health to all their Fleſh. Youth are too apt to be filled with vain Conceit, and are therefore very ready to hearken to the Inſtruction that cauſes to err from the Words of Knowledge. For, indeed, nothing can be more ſuitable to corrupt Nature, and to the great Opinion which Youth generally have of themſelves, than the Notions which have of late been ſo induſtriouſly propagated among us of the *Purity of human Nature*, and of the *Sufficiency of Man*. It is the very Delight of all our Hearts by Nature, and is ſo agreeable to the old Man, that none will ever think otherwiſe if left to themſelves — But, my Friends, I would be concerned for you. It is a melancholy thing that the God of this World hath blinded the Eyes of Multitudes in ſuch a manner, as to delight them with their own Deceivings —— If the Doctrines I have mentioned are in Truth a Part of the Words of Knowledge, as I firmly believe they are, the oppoſite Principles muſt be wrong, and are Inſtructions which cauſe to err. Avoid them, therefore, as you value your Souls turn from them, and paſs away—Unleſs you are made throughly ſenſible of your loſt Condition by Nature, you will never ſee your need of Chriſt, nor come to him for Salvation. And if you do not

unfeignedly believe in and obey the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, you cannot hope for Heaven ; [s] for there is no Salvation in any other : Neither is there any other Name under Heaven, given among Men whereby we muſt be ſaved——Attend diligently therefore to theſe things, and excuſe the Earneſtneſs with which I preſs you —— It is high Time to awake out of Sleep——True Religion, and the Power of Godlineſs have much declined among us ſince this falſe Inſtruction hath had ſo wide a Spread, for the Proof of which I appeal to *Facts which cannot be conteſted*— And further, ſince this new Scheme of Doctrine has become faſhionable, and the Religion of Nature been introduced to the Excluſion of true Chriſtianity, Infidelity has dreadfully prevailed, and Popery in Diſguiſe hath ſpread its malignant Poiſon through the whole Land—The Removal of theſe Diſorders depends upon the kind Reception and wiſe Improvement of theſe Words of Knowledge——Let them then be received by us of the riſing Generation with all gladneſs ; [t] for they are not carnal Weapons, but mighty thro' God to the pulling down of ſtrong holds.

Theſe are the Doctrines which through Grace ſupported our Fore-fathers under all the Cruelties which the Rage of Man and Devils

[s] Acts iv. 12. [t] 2 Cor. x. 4.

Devils could inflict — And they are handed down to us ſealed with their Blood —— Hearken to the Voice of Truth——[u] To the Law and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this Word it is becauſe there is no Light in them —— Search the Word of God impartially, and you will perceive that all the Doctrines of Scripture harmoniouſly conſpire to humble Man, and give all the glory of our Salvation to the grace of God—— [w] Stand therefore in the Way, and ſee and aſk for the old Paths where is the good way, and walk therein, and you ſhall find Reſt for your Souls.

Thirdly. Hence we learn how importunate we ſhould be with God for the Teachings of his Spirit——I have ſhown you that we are inſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing as of our ſelves; let this excite us to apply to the Throne of Grace — Prayer is a natural Duty, and the Advice which the Apoſtle *Peter* gave to *Simon* the Sorcerer may be ſuitably given to every unconverted Sinner— [x] Pray God if perhaps the Thought of thy Heart may be forgiven thee —— Although thou art in the gall of Bitterneſs and the Bond of Iniquity ——We may, with the impotent Man, lay at the Pool-ſide, though we have not Strength to put our ſelves therein for the Cure of our Diſeaſes. The means of

[u] Iſa. viii. 20. [w] Jer. vi. 16. [x] Acts viii. 22, 23.

of Grace are of divine Appointment, and muſt be attended upon at our Peril.—Duty is ours, the Succeſs is God's, who is free to give or with-hold his Grace as he pleaſes; and it is Impiety in any one to aſſert he is unjuſt in ſo doing —— May he not do what he will with his own? Is God *alone* obliged not only to pardon every obſtinate and perverſe Rebel, but to receive him into his Boſom? No, He is *ſovereign* and *free*; He doth according to his Will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and ſays, My [y] Council ſhall ſtand and I will do all my Pleaſure ——Though this be the Caſe, yet we have this Encouragement, that if we ſeek God in earneſt, he will be found—where the Soul really deſires the grace of God, we are aſſured He will beſtow it; for He ſatisfies the Poor with good Things; thoſe who are poor in Spirit, and are truly convinced of their Want of a Saviour, and his precious Benefits he will fill with ſpiritual Bleſſings; while thoſe who are rich in their own Conceit, and imagine they have need of Nothing, ſhall be ſent empty away. I ſhall cloſe with the Words of the Apoſtle, who ſets this Matter in the cleareſt Light, by ſhowing us that it is our Duty to [z] *Work out* (or *take pains about*) our

[y] Iſa. lxvi. 10. [z] Phil. ii. 13.

our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and yet at the ſame Time obſerves, that it is God alone who ſubdues the natural Enmity of our Hearts, and *worketh* in us to *will and to do* of his good Pleaſure.

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